

TESTIMONY

By Bernard L. Kavalier

Before the Committee on Government Administration and Elections

Regarding Senate Bill 559

Friday, February 25, 2011

Senator Slossberg, Representative Morin, and members of the GAE Committee, my name is Bernard Kavalier and I am a resident of West Harford. I am here today to speak in support of Senate Bill 559, "An Act Naming a State Building the "Lieutenant Governor Joseph J. Fauliso Facility."

Joseph Fauliso is a person of great dignity, intellect and integrity. His distinguished career in the service of our state of Connecticut, where he was born and raised, is virtually unprecedented. He served with distinction in all three branches of government: first as a judge of the Harford Municipal Court and the Connecticut Circuit Court, then as a State Senator representing the First District, where he served seven terms including three as President Pro Tempore, followed by ten years as Lieutenant Governor.

No individual served longer as Connecticut's Lieutenant Governor in the 20th century. In fact, you would need to go back to 1797 to find a person whose tenure in that office exceeded that of Joseph Fauliso.

Just this week, he celebrated his 95th birthday, and still lives in Hartford, although recent years have taken a notable toll on his health.

During his years in the legislature, where he was first elected in 1966, he became known as the Cicero of the Senate for his captivating oratory. He was a vigorous advocate for working people and earned the respect of his constituents and colleagues. He developed enduring friendships on both sides of the aisle, and held the legislative process in great reverence. He maintained an "open door policy" through his time at the Capitol, placing a priority on responding to the concerns of Connecticut residents.

He succeeded to the office of Lieutenant Governor in 1980 and was elected to that office in 1982 and 1986, running on a ticket led by Governor Bill O'Neill. He was a vocal and visible leader, serving as chair of the Governor's Development Cabinet, the Governor's Task Force on Safety in Public Buildings, the Missing Persons Coordinating Committee, the High Technology Council and the Task Force on Racial Harmony.

His character and decency, respect for all he encountered regardless of their station in life, and passion for all things Connecticut continue to be remembered fondly by those who served with him – including some still working in this building today. Although a man of deeply-held beliefs, his politics always reflected civility and dignity, and an

openness that transcended the hot-button issues. He would disagree without being disagreeable, and bring people together, whether in the Senate or in the state.

Some remember his tie-breaking vote to raise Connecticut's drinking age, others recall his steady leadership when he stepped in during Governor O'Neill's heart surgery and recuperation. Some remember his vocal support for expanding the participation of women in the political process, or his interest in promoting Connecticut businesses beyond our borders.

Your colleague Representative Labriola will probably recall when his father served in the Senate where Lieutenant Governor Fauliso presided, or when they faced each other on the ballot for that office. It was, as I remember, a campaign of issues, of respect, and of substance.

I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with Lieutenant Governor Fauliso, and would be grateful for your support of this legislation. It would be a fitting remembrance for a dedicated public servant, whose life's work was advancing the best interests of the people of Connecticut, and who did so with sincerity, compassion, conviction and common sense - always well spoken, always willing to listen, and always worth hearing.

Thank you very much.